

David Cotterrell: Project (Bristol)

Awarding Body: CABE (the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment)

Date Awarded: 31st March 2005

Art and Architecture grant awarded by CABE, Public Art South-West and Arts & Business.

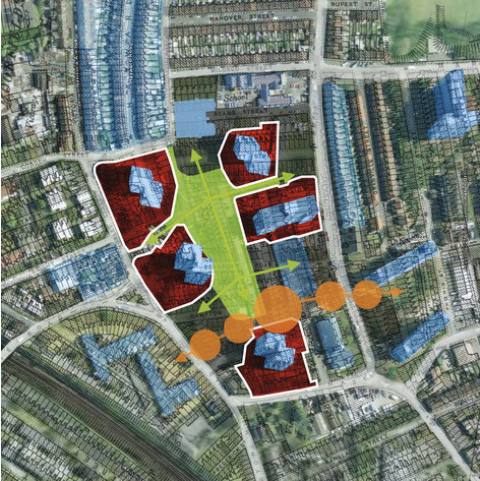
This Award facilitated a collaborative period of work with the architects, Levitt Bernstein within the context of a complex social housing scheme in the Barton Hill Area of Bristol.

It became clear from an early stage that the success of this project could not be guaranteed as an entirely autonomous process. Good architectural practice could support the area and desirable and safe homes are demanded. However, high quality housing will only become both safe and desirable if its relationship to the fabric of the area, public amenity, transport infrastructure and existing architecture could be clarified and defined through its development. Coordination and consensus needed to be developed between a range of agencies for the energetic activity of different clients to leave a coherent and positive legacy for Barton Hill. The outcomes of early discussions with Justin Owen of Levitt Bernstein reflected this belief, in considering the design of circulation routes and public amenity beyond the perimeter of the housing development sites as crucial to the realisation of the project. Nodal points were identified whose success or failure as attractors and wayfinding points could affect the perception and security of the area.

Initial concerns that the design team might be exceeding their remit were tempered by the additional support of the parallel EU funded Image project which has facilitated the extension of the scope of this aspirational work. Sovereign has taken active steps to attempt to embed this project in a wider dialogue, facilitating constructive meetings with Quadro (BSEIP), Bristol City Council Planning Department, Community at Heart, Bristol City Council parks department and the pilot Neighbourhood Management Organisation. The conclusion of these meetings was optimistic and supportive of a renewed approach to coordination. The progression of this commission into the next stage of greater community consultation and toward detailed design was framed within a sensitive and ambitious approach to support the longer term sustainability and improvement of the area.

The sovereign housing development formed the catalyst for the development of a public art strategy for the area. In parallel with the aspirations for built environment coordination and coherence, there are ambitions for the percent for art funds from the build to be supported by additional allocated monies from other schemes in order to enhance the ambition for artistic and cultural dividends from this period of dramatic change. There is a hope that the work, which will be defined and realised through the housing improvements and construction will create a foundation for future arts investment and within this brief an outline proposal for legacy arts projects was developed. Should this be adopted by the local council, an strategy of this nature may assist future developments and residents groups in ensuring consistency of quality and approach in coming years.

More information about the consultancy may be found [here](#).



Conflicting layers of plan information Credit: David Cotterrell (2005)



Transitional landscape Credit: David Cotterrell (2005)